

AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 18, 2008

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 23, 2008

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 23, 2008

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 8, 2008

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2007–08 REGULAR SESSION

## ASSEMBLY BILL

**No. 2895**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Brownley**

February 22, 2008

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An act to amend Section 60855 of the Education Code, relating to pupil achievement.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2895, as amended, Brownley. Pupil achievement: high school exit examination.

Existing law requires each pupil completing grade 12 to successfully pass the ~~California High School Exit Examination~~ *high school exit examination* as a condition of receiving a diploma of graduation or as a condition of graduation from high school. Existing law requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to contract for an independent evaluation of the exit examination, and requires the evaluation to be based on certain information.

This bill *also* would ~~also~~ include information gathered from statewide pupil identifiers with that information.

The bill would require the evaluation to include certain additional information, including, but not limited to, an analysis of the economic impact on pupils who do not meet the high school exit examination requirement.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

- 1     SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the  
2 following:
- 3     (a) The class of 2006 was the first high school graduating class  
4 required to pass the high school exit examination in order to receive  
5 a high school diploma.
- 6     (b) California has spent many millions of dollars on  
7 supplemental instruction, intensive remediation programs, and  
8 independent evaluation. However, there is no information about  
9 what happened to pupils who did not graduate on time, the  
10 effectiveness of alternative options to obtain a high school diploma  
11 or diploma equivalent, or remediation programs to assist pupils to  
12 pass the high school exit examination. It is essential for a  
13 determination of the most efficient use of scarce resources to  
14 evaluate what happened to pupils in the classes of 2006, 2007, and  
15 2008 who did not graduate on time.
- 16     (c) The State Department of Education reported a graduation  
17 rate of 67.1 percent for the class of 2006. Research concludes that  
18 is the lowest graduation rate of any class since 1997.
- 19     (d) The consequences for pupils who drop out of high school  
20 include lesser earnings, more health problems, a greater likelihood  
21 of being unemployed, and a greater reliance on government  
22 assistance.
- 23     (e) The rising demand for highly educated workers in California  
24 requires that more pupils graduate from high school and attain  
25 postsecondary education and training.
- 26     (f) California's independent evaluator of the high school exit  
27 examination found that little is known specifically about class of  
28 2006 members who did not graduate in June of 2006.
- 29     (g) The independent evaluator recommended:
- 30         (1) Tracking pupils who do not graduate on time.
- 31         (2) Investigating the factors that make the high school exit  
32 examination a more difficult graduation requirement for some  
33 groups of disadvantaged pupils by:
- 34             (A) Studying the reasons for low performance in schools with  
35 higher densities of minorities and pupils from low-income families.

1 (B) Analyzing, using pupil identifiers, pupil progress at earlier  
2 grades as measured by scores on the California Standards Tests,  
3 and for English language learners, the California English Language  
4 Development Test, to see where and when pupils begin to get off  
5 track.

6 SEC. 2. Section 60855 of the Education Code is amended to  
7 read:

8 60855. (a) By January 15, 2000, the Superintendent shall  
9 contract for a multiyear independent evaluation of the high school  
10 exit examination that is established pursuant to this chapter. The  
11 evaluation shall be based upon information gathered in field testing,  
12 annual administrations of the examination, surveys, and statewide  
13 pupil identifiers, and shall include all of the following:

14 (1) Analysis of pupil performance, broken down by grade level,  
15 gender, race or ethnicity, and subject matter of the examination,  
16 including any trends that become apparent over time.

17 (2) Analysis of the effects of the exit examination, if any, on  
18 college attendance, pupil retention, graduation, and dropout rates,  
19 including analysis of these effects on the population subgroups  
20 described in subdivision (b). This analysis shall include:

21 (A) To the extent that existing data is available or may be  
22 obtained by the independent evaluator, a determination of the  
23 pathways that pupils who do not meet the high school exit  
24 examination graduation requirement pursue.

25 (B) The number of pupils who do not graduate on time who  
26 participated in and obtained a diploma or diploma equivalent  
27 through the following—~~nine~~ 10 options specified by the  
28 Superintendent:

29 (i) Remedial supplemental instruction program.

30 (ii) Fifth year of high school.

31 (iii) Independent study program.

32 (iv) Charter school.

33 (v) Adult school.

34 (vi) Community college program leading to a high school  
35 diploma.

36 (vii) County court or community school program.

37 (viii) California High School Proficiency Exam.

38 (ix) General Education Development (GED) test.

39 (x) Options available to pupils pursuant to Chapter 526 of the  
40 Statutes of 2007.

(C) Analysis of the economic impact on pupils who do not meet the high school exit examination graduation requirement.

(3) Analysis of whether the exit examination is likely to have, or has, differential effects, whether beneficial or detrimental, on population subgroups described in subdivision (b), including:

(A) Whether pupils who failed the high school exit examination also failed to meet other graduation requirements.

(B) Whether pupils who failed the high school exit examination attend secondary schools with the following characteristics:

(i) Rank in deciles 1 to 3, inclusive, of the Academic Performance Index.

(ii) Employ a high percentage of underprepared teachers.

(iii) Have 25 percent or more of the school population classified as any one or more of the following:

(I) A category of children described in Title I of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (20 U.S.C. Sec. 6333(c)(1)(A) and (B)).

(II) English learner.

(III) Ethnic minority.

(b) In analyzing the characteristics of schools attended by pupils who fail to meet the high school exit examination requirement, the independent evaluator shall ~~review~~ *analyze and report on information from* the following reports:

(1) The report required pursuant to *subdivision (c) of* Section 1240.

(2) The report required pursuant to Section 33126, for the purpose of reviewing actual *school-level unrestricted* per pupil expenditures and actual ~~teacher salaries~~ *school-level average teacher salaries that meet or exceed school district or state averages*.

(c) Evaluations conducted pursuant to this section separately shall consider test results for each of the following population subgroups, provided that information concerning individuals shall not be gathered or disclosed in the process of preparing this evaluation.

(1) English language learners and non-English language learners.

(2) Individuals with exceptional needs and individuals without exceptional needs.

(3) Pupils who qualify for free or reduced-price meals and are enrolled in schools that qualify for assistance under Title 1 of the

1 federal Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law  
2 103-382) and pupils who do not qualify for free or reduced-price  
3 meals and are not enrolled in schools that qualify for assistance  
4 under Title 1 of the ~~Improving America's Schools Act of 1994~~.  
5 *federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*.

6 (4) Any group of pupils that has been determined by the  
7 independent evaluator to be affected differentially by the exit  
8 examination established pursuant to this chapter, including racial  
9 and ethnic subgroups.

10 (d) Using pupil identifiers, evaluations shall include analysis  
11 of pupil progress at earlier grades as measured by scores on the  
12 California Standards Test and, for English language learners, the  
13 California English Language Development Test, to determine  
14 where and when pupils who failed the high school exit examination  
15 begin to get off track in developing the skills necessary to be  
16 successful.

17 (e) Evaluation reports shall include recommendations to improve  
18 the quality, fairness, validity, and reliability of the examination.  
19 The independent evaluator also may make recommendations for  
20 revisions in design, administration, scoring, processing, or use of  
21 the examination, and to increase graduation rates for all pupils in  
22 California.

23 (f) The independent evaluator shall report to the Governor, the  
24 Legislative Analyst's Office, the Superintendent, the state board,  
25 the Secretary for Education, and the chairpersons of the education  
26 policy committees in both houses of the Legislature, in accordance  
27 with the following schedule:

28 (1) Preliminary report on field testing by July 1, 2000.

29 (2) First annual report by February 1, 2002.

30 (3) Regular biennial reports by February 1 of even-numbered  
31 years following 2002.